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Testimony of Rep. Donna Seidel
Senate Bill 402
Senate Committee on Health, Health Insurance, Privacy,
Property Tax Relief, and Revenue
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Good morning Chairman Erpenbach and committee members. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 402.

This legislation is very simple and straightforward. The bill expressly authorizes optometrists to dispense medicated contact lenses in addition to their current ability to prescribe and administer them.

I decided to introduce this bill after talking with an optometrist from my district and learning about the statutory changes that are needed. SB 402 has the full support of the Wisconsin Optometric Association. Senator Vinehout and I are very proud of the strong bi-partisan support the bill has received.

Under current law, doctors of optometry are permitted to prescribe both contact lenses and medications that treat eye conditions. Additionally, licensed optometrists may provide a complimentary sample of the therapeutic agent to a patient to whom the optometrist has rendered care in his or her office.

New technology is constantly being developed to more effectively meet the eye care needs of health care patients. Very soon, the FDA is expected to give final approval to medicated contact lenses that treat eye conditions. The medication will be contained in the contact lens and released into the eye over a period of time.

The Assembly version of this bill (AB 591) passed out of committee unanimously and is scheduled for a floor vote next week Tuesday. The Assembly Health Committee adopted one a technical amendment to correct a drafting error. Senator Vinehout will be working with the committee to have the same amendment considered here.

Thank you for your attention to this legislation. I would now like to introduce Peter Theo from the Wisconsin Optometric Association.